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# Wisconsin Forestry Notes

March 2005

Wisconsin DNR - Division of Forestry

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## County Forests Achieve Certification

Twenty-seven of Wisconsin's 29 counties with designated County Forests are participating as group members in one or both of the audit "pools" for awards of Forest Certification through the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) and Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). The certification reports and awards presentation will take place at the Wisconsin County Forest Administrator's Spring Meeting on March 17-18 in Wausau. Only the smallest two County Forests (Monroe with 6,706 acres and Vernon with 880 acres) are not participating at this time. Approximately 2.3 million acres of forest land in the other 27 counties are included in this certification award. A field audit last fall focused on the stewardship practices of each county and on DNR's role as the group certification manager. Auditors started with a review of written policies and then gathered evidence from interviews and site visits to verify that the applicants measure up to the principles of the independent third-party certification systems. The FSC and SFI standards involve social, economic and environmental criteria established by regional and international experts. The auditors also gathered input from stakeholder representatives across the state on the performance of DNR and the County Forests. Then a County Forest certification committee addressed non-conformances identified in the audit. Corrective actions include a number of changes to policies, handbooks, County Forest planning, and county-specific procedures. County Forest certification feasibility reports are online at: <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/forestry/certification/county.html> For more information contact Jeff Barkley at 608-264-9217.

*About 2.3 million acres in 27 County Forests will officially receive certification at the March 17-18 meeting of the Wisconsin County Forest Administrators.*

## Urban Forestry Grants Awarded

DNR's urban forestry program has awarded 56 grants totalling \$627,600 to Wisconsin communities and nonprofit organizations for community projects. Eleven communities received the maximum grant possible of \$25,000. Projects range from the development of urban forestry plans and urban forest maintenance to the creation of volunteer involvement programs. The urban forestry grant program was established by the Legislature in 1993. To learn more about the program and the 2005 recipients, visit <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/Forestry/UF/grants/index.htm> or contact Richard Rideout at 608-267-0843.

*Urban forestry grants fund projects that improve a community's capacity to manage its trees.*

## Gearing Up for the 2005 Fire Season

Wisconsin's major fire season typically starts in mid-March and DNR personnel have been preparing for this during the fall and winter months. A mock wildfire on September 11 near Minong provided Department and local fire department firefighters with an opportunity to practice structural protection and organization as it relates to a major forest fire. That training exercise included 27 volunteer fire departments, county and state law enforcement agencies, local ambulance services as well as DNR staff from four counties and helped ensure a coordinated team effort in the event of an emergency. This is particularly important as an increasing number of people build homes in woodland areas. An October forest fire training session between the DNR and the 147<sup>th</sup> Army National Guard from Madison used a controlled burn in Necedah. The Guard maintains 14 Sikorsky UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters in Madison. These have the potential to be a valuable tool to help support ground suppression resources during emergency forest fire conditions when life and property are imminently threatened. During the exercise, two Blackhawks made 20 drops apiece - roughly 30,000 gallons of water - in little more than an hour. This amount of water would be equivalent to 12 fire department tanker trucks. Of the 29,000 wildfires in Wisconsin over the past 19 years, less than 2 percent reached a magnitude to warrant using the Blackhawks. But in that small percentage of our fires, the state incurs 80 percent of all property damage caused by wildland fires.

A new publication available online recaps the 2004 fire season and lays out future directions of the wildland fire program: <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/forestry/Publications/index.htm> For more information contact Trent Marty at 608-266-7978.

*The increasing number of homes in wooded areas raises grave fire concerns, but DNR prepares for emergency situations through training and testing new equipment.*

*The Governor's Conference closed the Year of Wisconsin Forestry with new collaborative partnerships working towards ensuring the future sustainability of Wisconsin forests.*

*Wisconsin loggers plan a day at the Capitol to celebrate the recognition they earned from the Governor and certifiers.*

*Only about 1% of Wisconsin's old-growth forests remain, but we are learning how to mimic nature to develop old-growth characteristics while producing wood products for society's needs. Read more in this new DNR publication.*

*Have you read the three books produced during the 2004 Year of Wisconsin Forestry? Two are available for sale or read all 3 at your local library!*

## Conference Begins Forest Plan Implementation

Nearly 250 stakeholders gathered in Madison on November 9-10 to begin framing a plan of action addressing issues facing Wisconsin's forests. Governor Doyle kicked off the 2-day working session that focused on these seven themes as they relate to Wisconsin forests: 1) conserving biological diversity, 2) enhancing urban forests, 3) minimizing the threat of invasive exotic species, 4) enhancing assistance to private forest landowners, 5) minimizing recreational use conflicts, 6) maintaining the forest-based economy, and 7) managing the impacts of changes in land use and forest ownership. The partnerships and commitments formed at this conference are continuing to develop into coordinated action to ensure the long term sustainability of Wisconsin forests. The Wisconsin Council on Forestry discussed outcomes of the conference at their December meeting and the conference leaders continue to build on the work begun during the conference. To learn about the ongoing work of the conference, visit [http://wisconsinforestry.org/activities\\_content\\_governor\\_home-0.html](http://wisconsinforestry.org/activities_content_governor_home-0.html) For a CD with the materials from the conference, contact Sarah Attwood at 608-266-1327.

## Wisconsin Loggers Earn Recognition

Governor Doyle has named March 23, 2005 as "**Professional Logger Appreciation Day.**" A convoy of forest-industry trucks will gather at the State Capitol on that day to draw attention to issues facing the forest resource and the industry. The day's activities, being organized by the Wisconsin Professional Loggers Association (WPLA) and the Timber Producers Association, also include a reception commemorating the second graduating class of the Master Loggers program. The first class of 24 Master Logger companies was certified in 2004. Master Logger Certification commits individual logging contractors to the use of sustainable timber harvesting practices. Master Loggers have attained a high level of training and experience and have undergone a rigorous auditing process in which their harvesting and business practices are field verified against more than 50 performance standards, with certification coming from an independent board. Last fall, Time Inc. announced that it recognizes the Wisconsin Master Logger Program as a certified source of sustainable wood fiber. For more information, contact WPLA at 877-819-9908.

## Managing Wisconsin's Old-growth

The DNR-Division of Forestry has a new 16-page publication highlighting the historical, present and future condition of old-growth forests in Wisconsin. Current research projects related to old-growth are also showcased in the publication. You can read "Managing Wisconsin's Old-growth" online at: <http://www.wnrmag.com/supps/2004/oct04/intro.htm> To request a printed copy of publication number FR-293-2004, send an e-mail to [Forestry.Webmail@dnr.state.wi.us](mailto:Forestry.Webmail@dnr.state.wi.us) or contact Joe Kovach at 715-453-1252 for more information.

## Books About Wisconsin Forestry Available

Santa didn't bring you the new books about Wisconsin forestry? You can get them for yourself! "100 Years of Wisconsin Forestry" is for sale from [Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association](#) (phone 715—346-4798). This 136-page gem chronicles the evolution of sustainable forestry in Wisconsin. [Trees For Tomorrow](#) in Eagle River is selling a new children's picture book (for 4 to 7 year olds) called "In Grandpa's Woods." Get this at <http://www.treesfortomorrow.com/books.htm> or call 1-800-838-9472. Though it isn't for sale, you'll want to check out the other book produced during the 2004 Year of Wisconsin Forestry at your local Wisconsin public library. "Wisconsin Forest Tales" is a collection of historical fiction stories written for 9 to 12 year old students.

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